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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT  
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2005

THIS REPORT PRESENTS THE TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER THREE  
THEMES:

HEADLINES  
BRIEFING  
EDITORIAL OPINION  
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#### HEADLINES

##### MASS APPEAL

`Peshmerge' at the White House - Hurriyet  
Bush Gives Barzani a Warm Greeting - Milliyet  
Barzani Given Presidential Treatment at White House - Aksam  
Iraq Constitution Approved by 78.59 Percent - Milliyet  
Iraq Becoming Federalized - Sabah  
Al-Qaida Claims Hotel Bombings in Baghdad - Aksam  
Another Blow against Bush: US Casualties Reach 2,000 - Sabah  
Russia, China Block Sanctions against Syria - Aksam  
Hurricane Wilma Kills 6 in Florida - Turkiye  
Wilma's Bill: 9 Billion USD, 8 Casualties - Sabah  
BBC to Launch Arabic Language TV - Milliyet

##### OPINION MAKERS

Bush Calls Barzani 'Mr. President' - Yeni Safak  
Barzani Gets Presidential Welcome at White House -  
Cumhuriyet  
Bush Welcomes 'President' Barzani - Zaman  
Talabani: The US is Our Protector - Zaman  
Talabani: Iraq Needs Turkey - Yeni Safak  
Iraq Constitution Approved by a Narrow Margin - Radikal  
Iraq Body count: 30,000 Civilians Killed in Iraq - Yeni  
Safak  
Basrans Support Insurgency - Yeni Safak  
Talat to Push Annan For New Cyprus Initiative - Radikal  
UN Convenes on Syria - Yeni Safak  
Bush: Military Operation against Syria a Last Option -  
Cumhuriyet  
Mehlis Report: Hariri Assassin Hiding in Turkey - Yeni Safak

#### BRIEFING

Barzani at the White House: All papers report that KDP  
leader and Iraqi Kurdistan President Mesud Barzani met with  
President Bush yesterday at the White House. Under the  
headline "Peshmerge at the White House," "Hurriyet" stresses  
the President's praise for Barzani's 'courage' and 'vision.'  
Papers note that Barzani was afforded 'presidential  
treatment' in Washington. All papers note that President  
Bush repeatedly addressed Barzani as 'president,' and said  
'it is an honor to host Barzani, President of the Kurdistan  
Regional Government in Iraq, at the White House.'

Kurdistan Flag at Habur Border Gate: "Sabah" reports that  
Turkey has been angered by a Kurdish flag hoisted on the  
Iraqi side of Habur border gate. Officials in northern Iraq  
refused to take the flag down, saying that they were  
replacing old Iraqi flags from the Saddam Hussein regime era  
with Kurdish flags. The paper claims that the flag switch  
is a sign that Iraq has now been 'federalized.'

Talabani Interview with "Zaman": Commenting to "Zaman" on  
Massoud Barzani's Washington visit as the president of the  
Kurdish region, Iraqi President Talabani said he expected  
issues such as border security and security problems in  
northern Iraq to be discussed. 'The PUK and KDP have made a  
reality their goal to establish a parliament, and a  
government will be formed in the very near future' Talabani  
said. On Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan's recent statement  
that Turkey was 'running out of patience' because Iraq was  
not taking steps to eliminate the presence of the PKK in the  
north of the country, Talabani said it was impossible for  
them to remove the PKK by using force, and urged that the  
issue be solved through political means. 'An operation  
against the terrorist PKK cannot be carried out given the  
condition the Iraqi forces are in, and any military  
operation against this terrorist network might push its  
militants towards other insurgency groups,' he noted.  
Talabani said that Iraqi-Turkish relations have always been  
good, and expressed hope for developing these ties further,

adding that he planned to visit Turkey in the near future. Talabani complained that it is not easy to establish channels of communication with some 'marginal' Turkmen parties. Although there was widespread speculation during the pre-election period that the Turkmen in Iraq number five million, Talabani said that the election outcome proved this argument to be incorrect. Talabani believes that the Turkmen are wrong to object to the return of Kurds to Kirkuk, as the Kurds had been forced to leave the city during Saddam's era. Talabani pledged that the Iraqi administration will make every effort to make Kirkuk part of the 'Kurdistan Federation,' and that this clause will be put into effect as soon as the normalization of Kirkuk is completed. 'It was the Kurds who made great sacrifices for the constitution,' Talabani stated, adding that although Sunni Arabs are opposed to the establishment of a Shiite federation, they do not have a problem with the establishment of a Kurdish federal entity in the north of Iraq. The Iraqi president guaranteed that the constitution will secure the basic rights and freedoms that everyone is entitled to. 'The referendum marks the greatest fight against terrorist groups in Iraq, and its outcome represents a grand victory that the nation has won over them,' Talabani concluded.

US Soldiers Kidnap Girls from Baghdad Orphanage: The Islamist-oriented "Yeni Safak" and fundamentalist "Vakit" carry a story first reported by the Ihlas News Agency (IHA) from Baghdad that two Iraqi girls staying at an orphanage in the ar-Reshad district of the Iraqi capital claimed they had been kidnapped by US soldiers along with six other girls last week. Orphanage director Suad Mahdi al-Hafaji confirmed that eight girls, aged 15 to 22, had been kidnapped last week by US soldiers, and that six are still missing. One of the girls who claims to have been kidnapped, Vijdan Kazem, said that US soldiers forced the girls out of the orphanage and into Humvee vehicles. 'They hit me on the neck with the butt of a gun. I started screaming and then they threw me from the vehicle in an area I did not know, but I managed to find my way back to the orphanage. They also told us on the road that we should say we had been kept in the orphanage against our will if asked by the police,' Kazem said. Falah, the other girl who says she was kidnapped but managed to return, said she had been released in the Alawi al-Hilla district, and added that the soldiers had given her 2,000 dinars for a taxi back to the orphanage. Falah said they had asked Iraqi officials about their friends but had not received an answer. The orphanage said the names of the other kidnapped girls were Zaman Jabbar, Dumu Maan, Zainab Hamood, Fatima Askoori, and Ahlam Abdullah, who is mute.

Cindy Sheehan Interviewed on CNN-Turk: US anti-war activist Cindy Sheehan, whose son was killed while serving with US forces in Iraq, was interviewed on CNN-Turk yesterday. Portions of the interview appeared in several papers this morning. Sheehan harshly criticized President Bush, saying that the President 'and all those supporters who have cooperated with him in these lies' should be tried for war crimes.

Iranian Ambassador on Ties with Turkey, Iraq: In an interview with Turkish TV channel "Kanal-D," Iranian Ambassador to Ankara Firouz Dowlatatabadi said that Iran supports Iraq's territorial integrity. Dowlatatabadi said that Iraqi Kurdish leaders, aware of the fact that the Kurds will not manage to establish an independent government, have chosen to cooperate with the central government in Baghdad. 'As a matter of fact, the desire for an independent Kurdistan is being provoked by the occupying forces, and such a scenario is supported by the US, Britain, and Israel,' he claimed. Asked about the PKK, Dowlatatabadi said that Iran and Turkey have a security cooperation agreement on that issue. 'Iran does not allow terrorist groups to take action against Turkey from Iranian territory,' he stressed. Dowlatatabadi also pointed to strong trade and economic ties between Iran, and Turkey and praised the political consensus the two countries reached on regional and international issues.

Talat Visits Ankara before Traveling to US: Turkish Cypriot leader Mehmet Ali Talat met with Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul in Ankara on the eve of his visit to the United States. At a joint press conference with Talat following their meeting, Gul voiced the hope that 'important developments' would unfold during the Turkish Cypriot leader's calls in the US. 'The time has come to take new steps for a comprehensive solution in Cyprus,' Gul said, inviting the UN to get involved in efforts for a settlement. Gul said that UN Secretary General's efforts should be supported by the UN and the EU. 'Otherwise, this issue will continue to be a chronic problem, and overshadow many other strategic issues,' Gul warned. Talat said that while in New York, he will ask UNSYG Annan to resume the Cyprus talks. 'I believe this visit will help end the isolation of the Turkish Cypriots,' Talat said. Diplomatic sources expect Talat to

draw attention to Gul's proposal to lift restrictions simultaneously on all sides in Cyprus during his meetings with US officials. Talat is also expected to ask Rice to approve direct US flights to northern Cyprus and to open a US representation in the north. Meanwhile, "Hurriyet" Washington correspondent Kasim Cindemir wrote that Talat's visit would have only 'symbolic' value, and predicted that no significant steps toward ending the isolation of Turkish Cypriots are expected. Cindemir argued that although Washington has repeatedly promised to reduce the isolation of northern Cyprus, US officials now say that such steps 'remain under review.'

Ereli on Talat Visit to US: State Spokesman Adam Ereli answered a question yesterday on the visit of Turkish Cypriot leader Mehmet Ali Talat to the US, and his comments were picked up on the all-news channel NTV. 'We have periodically met with leaders of the Turkish Cypriot community,' Ereli said: 'This is an opportunity to hear from him the views of that community and discuss our mutual interest and mutual goal of achieving a peaceful settlement of the Cyprus issue based on the Annan plan.' Ereli said that US policy on Cyprus has not changed, and called on the leaders of both communities to engage in 'serious and sincere discussions' based on the UN-sponsored peace plan.

Merve Kavakci's Headscarf on Display in US Senate: All papers report that the headscarf of former Turkish parliamentarian Merve Kavakci, who was ejected from the parliament in the 1990s for wearing a headscarf, is now being displayed in the United States Senate building as part of an exhibit called "Body of Belief." Secular papers claim that some of the information in the display is incorrect. They argue that Kavakci was not stripped of her Turkish citizenship because of the headscarf issue, but because she 'attained US citizenship without permission.' Islamist-oriented "Yeni Safak" takes a different tack, arguing that Turkey's 'shame' on the headscarf issue is now 'on display' in the United States.

Gul Calls on OIC to Help Pakistan, Palestine, Iraq and Afghanistan: Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul called on the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) ambassadors at a Ramadan fast-breaking dinner on Tuesday to support earthquake victims in Pakistan. Gul also urged the OIC to continue economic and political support to the Palestinian people. Gul noted that Israel's pullout from the Gaza Strip had been a 'step forward' with regard to the implementation of the road map, adding that efforts of the Palestinian administration for reforms should be supported. Gul also said that political processes in Iraq and Afghanistan should be strongly supported, underlining the need in both countries for humanitarian aid and reconstruction. Gul noted that the opening of EU accession talks with Turkey had been welcomed in the Islamic world. 'Turkey's new position in Europe will be a positive element with respect to the Islamic world's relations with Europe,' Gul said.

Baykal Claims Secret Agreement on Incirlik Airbase: Main opposition CHP leader Deniz Baykal told his party group yesterday that he had heard news claiming there is a new 'secret' legal arrangement for operations at Incirlik Airbase, "Milliyet" reports. 'The agreement is being kept secret. If it envisages foreign troops entering Turkey,

SIPDIS then a parliamentary decision is needed. Use of Incirlik Airbase is being demanded through agreements that violate the Turkish Constitution. The government has to inform the nation and the opposition on this matter. It cannot by-pass the authority of the parliament,' Baykal said.

Mesrob II Criticizes 'Racist' Remarks by AKP Lawmaker: "Hurriyet" reports that Armenian Patriarch Mesrob II said yesterday that AK Party lawmaker Ramazan Toprak had spoken as 'racist' when he said that Yucel Askin, the rector of Yuzuncu Yil University in Van, was 'of Armenian heritage.' Askin was arrested on corruption charges in a controversial move allegedly manipulated by the AKP government in an effort to rid the university of 'secularist elements.' Mesrob II said Toprak's remarks aimed at humiliating Armenians, and that such an attitude cannot be accepted in modern, pluralistic, and democratic countries.

Court Fines 20 for Using Kurdish Alphabet Characters: A court in the mainly Kurdish southeastern city of Siirt fined 20 people for using the letters Q and W on posters at a Kurdish new year (Nevruz) celebration last year, under a law banning characters not used in the Turkish alphabet. The court fined each of the 20 people 100 YTL (76 USD) for carrying the placards, written in Kurdish, at the event last year. The letters Q and W do not exist in the Turkish alphabet, but are used in Kurdish. At the urging of the EU, Turkey lifted bans on Kurdish education and broadcasting in 2002, but strong resistance from the bureaucracy has delayed

implementation of the reforms. Many shops and companies in Turkey have names and signs using the letters Q, W and X, but they have not been prosecuted.

DIE: 2.317 Million Unemployed in Turkey: Turkey's average unemployment rate from June to August stood at 9.1 percent, the same as in the three months from May-July 2005, according to the Household Labor Force Survey results announced by the State Statistics Institute (DIE) on Tuesday. The number of unemployed during the June-August period was 2.317 million, up slightly from 2.305 million in the May-July period. The unemployment rate stood at 9.1 percent as of July 2005. Unemployment has remained high in Turkey despite significant economic growth in the last few years, partly due to austerity measures taken by businesses after the 2001 financial crisis. Unemployment was 10.3 percent in 2004, and 10.5 percent in 2003.

BBC to Launch Arabic TV: The BBC is planning to launch a new television channel that will broadcast in Arabic to compete with channels such as Al-Jazeera, papers report. The BBC radio will end broadcasts in 10 other languages in order to finance the new channel, but the BBC Turkish service is not among the broadcasts to be terminated. BBC services for Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Greece, Kazakhstan, Poland, Slovakia, and Thailand will be ended.

Turkish Airliner Makes Emergency Landing in Budapest after Bomb Threat: A An Airbus A-321 passenger plane belonging to the Turkish Fly Air Company with 80 passengers aboard had to make an emergency landing in Budapest, Hungary after receiving a bomb threat yesterday. Emergency checks showed that the threat had been a hoax.

#### EDITORIAL OPINION: Iraq

"Democracy and Stability: Having Both is Best"  
Sami Kohen commented in the mass appeal "Milliyet" (10/26): "The connection between stability and democracy continues to be a major topic for political discussion, which has become even more important in light of George Bush's democracy initiative in the Broader Middle East. The drive for the US leader's initiative undoubtedly comes from national interest calculations rather than from some commitment to high-minded ideals. Iraq is the most telling piece of evidence in this regard. The Bush administration began the occupation by giving different pretexts, but now the theme of the occupation is presented as 'establishing democracy.' But the chaos and disorder that has followed the toppling of Saddam has led to enormous bloodshed and a process of democracy imposed from outside. The immediate choice for the man on the street in Iraq on the 'democracy or stability' question would be stability."

"Iraqi Kurdistan"  
Okay Gonensin wrote in the mass appeal "Vatan" (10/26): "First, Talabani was invited to the White House by President Bush as a president. Following that, Barzani went to Washington as the 'President of Iraqi Kurdistan.' These two invitations show that the US Administration accepts Iraqi Kurdistan as a federally independent structure. The integrity of Iraq has come up frequently the American occupation of the country. Each relevant party has talked about support for Iraq's territorial integrity, but each phase of developments in Iraq has brought the country closer to disintegration. Turkish official policy for Iraq has been based on Iraq's territorial integrity. This means that Turkey opposes an independent Kurdish state in Iraq. Turkey has also expressed its concerns about the problems faced by the Turkmen community in Iraq. Despite Turkey's expectations on this issue, none of these sensitivities about the Turkmen have been eliminated. On the contrary, every necessary measure has been taken to enhance the de facto Kurdish state in Iraq. . Given the current circumstances, the only option for Turkey is to establish peaceful, neighborly relations with Iraq. The Turkish border is the only outlet through which Iraqi Kurdistan can breathe normally. Turkey has all the elements to assist in Iraq's economic development. If Iraqi Kurdistan chooses to cooperate with Turkey and the Turkish people, it will be an important step for the improvement of regional peace."

MCELDOWNEY